

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4123
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UR CGEN PINT
SUBJECT: ACCESS TO EMBASSY

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 2:30 PM SEPTEMBER 5, A FAMILY CONSISTING OF SEVEN INDIVIDUALS WAS TEMPORARILY PREVENTED FROM ENTERING EMBASSY BY MILITIA PERSONNEL STATIONED AT ENTRANCES. AS THEY APPROACHED EMBASSY, THE FAMILY APPARENTLY BECAME ENGAGED IN A VERBAL ALTERCATION WITH THE MILITIA AFTER WHICH THE FAMILY ATTEMPTED TO RUSH THROUGH THE ENTRANCE INTO THE EMBASSY. THREE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY MANAGED IMMEDIATELY TO ENTER THE EMBASSY WHILE THE REMAINING FOUR INDIVIDUALS WERE APPREHENDED AND TAKEN TO THE MILITIA BUILDING AT THE SOUTH END OF EMBASSY BUILDING. TWO OF THE FOUR APPREHENDED INDIVIDUALS WERE RELEASED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. CONSULAR OFFICER THEN TALKED WITH MILITIA PERSONNEL EXPRESSING DESIRE TO TALK WITH THE TWO REMAINING DETAINED PERSONS IN ORDER TO DETERMINE IF THEY HAD BUSINESS AT THE EMBASSY. THE REMAINING FAMILY MEMBERS WERE THEN RELEASED AND ALLOWED TO ENTER THE EMBASSY.

2. IN SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEW WITH CONOFF, THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY, PIOTR PAVLOVICH VASCHENKO, MAINTAINED THAT THE ENTIRE FAMILY (WHICH HE SAID NUMBERS SIXTEEN PERSONS) DESIRES
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TO IMMIGRATE TO THE UNITED STATES. VASCHENKO MAINTAINED

THAT HE HAD BEEN TO THE EMBASSY IN 1963 AND 1968 AND THAT HE HAD EXPERIENCED SIMILAR ACCESS PROBLEMS DURING THOSE VISITS. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE TALKED WITH THE AMBASSADOR DURING HIS 1968 VISIT AND ALSO MAINTAINED THAT HE HAD FILLED OUT FS-497 FORMS DURING THE 1968 VISIT. HE ALSO TOLD CONSOFF THAT HE AND HIS WIFE HAD BEEN ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED AFTER THE 1968 VISIT. EMBASSY FILES, HOWEVER, CONTAIN NO RECORD OF THESE PREVIOUS VISITS OR OF AN ACTIVE IMMIGRANT VISA CASE FOR THE VASCHENKO FAMILY.

3. DURING THE INTERVIEW, CONOFF SUGGESTED THAT THE FAMILY COMPLETE FS-497S IN ORDER TO BEGIN AN EMBASSY FILE ON THE CASE. VASCHENKO INDICATED THAT THE FAMILY DESIRES TO IMMIGRATE FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS SINCE THE SOVIET SYSTEM IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE BAPTIST BELIEFS OF THE FAMILY. THE FAMILY, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY HAS NO RELATIVES IN THE US WHO COULD PREPARE AN INVITATION FOR USE IN AN APPLICATION FOR SOVIET EXIT PERMISSION. VASCHENKO ASKED CONSOFF TO SEND LETTERS ASKING FOR A "ZYZOV" FOR THE FAMILY TO TWO FRIENDS IN THE US. CONSOFF MADE NO PROMISES OF DELIVERY BUT AGREED TO SEND LETTERS TO DEPT FOR DISPOSITION AT THE DISCRETION OF DEPT. AFTER COMPLETING FORMS, ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY DEPARTED EMBASSY WITHOUT INCIDENT.

4. DURING AMBASSADOR'S WEEKLY PRESS BRIEFING, PRESS MEMBERS INQUIRED RE ACCESS INCIDENT AND WERE GIVEN DETAILS OF THE DETENTION AND RELEASE OF THE INDIVIDUALS. WITH REGARD TO THE CASE, PRESS WAS TOLD THAT THE FAMILY DESIRES TO IMMIGRATE TO US, THAT THEY CLAIMED TO HAVE PREVIOUSLY VISITED EMBASSY, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ALLOWED TO FILL OUT FORMS NECESSARY TO BEGIN A CASE FILE. PRESS WAS ALSO TOLD THAT FAMILY HAS NO CLOSE RELATIVES IN US.

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